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Lynne Finley
District Clerk
Collin County, Texas
By Alicia Hamblin Deputy
Envelope ID: 41857538

CAUSE NO. 429-01732-2020

RICHARD HOGLE

Plaintiff

v.

**SAFECO INSURANCE COMPANY OF
INDIANA**

Defendant

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IN THE DISTRICT COURT

COLLIN COUNTY, TEXAS

_____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

PLAINTIFF RICHARD HOGLE'S ORIGINAL PETITION

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE OF SAID COURT:

COMES NOW, Richard Hogle, (hereinafter referred to as "Plaintiff"), complaining of Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana, (hereinafter referred to as "Defendant") and for cause of action would respectfully show unto this Honorable Court and Jury as follows:

DISCOVERY CONTROL PLAN

1. Plaintiff intends for discovery to be conducted under Level 3 of Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 190.4 and affirmatively pleads that this suit is not governed by the expedited-actions process of Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 169 because Plaintiff seeks monetary relief of over \$100,000.00.

PARTIES

2. Plaintiff is an individual residing in Collin County, Texas.
3. Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana is a foreign insurance company engaging in the business of insurance in the State of Texas. Defendant may be served with process by serving its registered agent of

service, Corporation Service Company, located at the following address: 211 East 7th Street, Suite 620
Austin, Texas 78701-3218.

JURISDICTION

4. The Court has jurisdiction over this cause of action because the amount in controversy is within the jurisdictional limits of the Court.
5. The Court has jurisdiction over Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana because Defendant is a foreign insurance company that engages in the business of insurance in the State of Texas and Plaintiff's causes of action arise out of Defendant's business activities in the State of Texas. Specifically, Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana sought out and marketed for insurance in Texas and has "purposefully availed" itself of the privilege of conducting activities in Texas. *Kelly v. General Interior Constr., Inc.*, 301 S.W.3d 653, 660-61 (Tex. 2010).

VENUE

6. Venue is proper in Collin County, Texas, because the Property is situated in Collin County, Texas. TEX. CIV. PRAC. & REM. CODE § 15.032.

FACTS

7. Plaintiff purchased a policy from Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana, (hereinafter referred to as "the Policy"), which was in effect at the time of loss.
8. The Policy was purchased to insure Plaintiff's property, (hereinafter referred to as "the Property"), which is located at 5319 Stone Falls Lane, Dallas, Texas 75287.
9. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and/or its agent sold the Policy insuring the Property to Plaintiff.

10. Plaintiff is a “consumer” as defined under the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (“DTPA”) because he is an individual who sought or acquired by purchase or lease, goods or services, for commercial, personal or household use.
11. On or about April 13, 2019, Plaintiff experienced a severe weather related event which caused substantial damage to the Property and surrounding homes and businesses in the area. The Property’s damage constitutes a covered loss under the Policy issued by Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana.
12. Specifically, Defendant performed an unreasonable and insufficient investigation of the claim. Defendant failed to document all the damage to the property caused by the storm in question. Although damage was covered under the policy, Defendant wrongly excluded the damage to the property, including damage to the roof. Defendant wrongly under-scoped the damage to the property and did not give the full allowance to restore the property to its pre-loss conditions.
13. The storm caused damage to the property’s roof, including damage to the shingles, flashings, and other structural parts of the roof. The significant damage to the property required full replacement of the damage items. Defendant intentionally did not properly inspect and failed to give an allowance to repair all the damage caused by the storm. Defendant wrongly denied coverage for the roof although the damage was covered under the policy. This was intentionally done by Defendant to deny full replacement of the roof.
14. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana wrongfully underpaid Plaintiff’s claim and refused to issue a full and fair payment for the covered loss as was rightfully owed under the Policy.

15. Defendant made numerous errors in estimating the value of Plaintiff's claim, as exhibited by its assigned adjuster's method of investigation and estimation of Plaintiff's loss, all of which were designed to intentionally minimize and underpay the loss incurred by Plaintiff. Defendant's assigned adjuster failed to fully quantify Plaintiff's covered losses, thus demonstrating that Defendant's assigned adjuster did not conduct a thorough investigation of Plaintiff's claim and/or intentionally adjusted Plaintiff's claim improperly.
16. Specifically, Defendant, independently and through its assigned adjuster, intentionally and knowingly conducted a substandard investigation of the Property. This is evidenced by Defendant's assigned adjuster's estimate, which failed to include all necessary items Plaintiff is entitled to under the Policy to place the Property in a pre-loss condition.
17. Defendant's estimate did not allow for adequate funds to cover the cost of repairs and therefore grossly undervalued all of the damages sustained to the Property. As a result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiff's claim was intentionally and knowingly underpaid.
18. Defendant's assigned adjuster acted as an authorized agent of Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana. Defendant's assigned adjuster acted within the course and scope of their authority as authorized by Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana. Plaintiff relied on Defendant and Defendant's assigned adjuster to properly adjust the claim regarding the Property and to be issued payment to fix such damage, which did not happen and has not been rectified to date.
19. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana failed to perform its contractual duties to adequately compensate Plaintiff under the terms of the Policy. Specifically, Defendant refused to pay the full

proceeds owed under the Policy. Due demand was made by Plaintiff for proceeds to be in an amount sufficient to cover the damaged Property.

20. As a result of Defendant's wrongful acts and omissions, Plaintiff was forced to retain the professional services of McClenny Moseley & Associates, PLLC, who is representing Plaintiff with respect to these causes of action.

AGENCY

21. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all facts and circumstances set forth under the foregoing paragraphs.
22. All acts by Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana were undertaken and completed by its officers, agents, servants, employees, and/or representatives. All such acts were either done with the full authorization or ratification of Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and/or were completed in its normal and routine course and scope of employment.
23. Defendant and Defendant's assigned adjuster's conduct constitutes multiple violations of the Texas Insurance Code, Unfair Settlement Practices. TEX. INS. CODE § 541.060(a). All violations under this subsection are made actionable by TEX. INS. CODE § 541.151.
24. Defendant is liable for the unfair and deceptive acts of its assigned adjuster because he/she meets the definition of a "person" as defined by the Texas Insurance Code. The term "person" is defined as "any individual, corporation, association, partnership, reciprocal or inter insurance exchange, Lloyds plan, fraternal benefit society, or other legal entity engaged in the business of insurance, including an agent, broker, *adjuster* or life and health insurance counselor." TEX. INS. CODE §541.002(2) (emphasis

added); *see also Liberty Mutual Ins. Co. v. Garrison Contractors, Inc.* 966 S.W.2d 482, 484 (Tex. 1998)

(holding an insurance company employee to be a person for the purpose of bringing a cause of action against them under the Texas Insurance Code and subjecting them to individual liability).

BREACH OF CONTRACT

25. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all facts and circumstances set forth under the foregoing paragraphs.

26. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's conduct constitutes a breach of the insurance contract made between Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and Plaintiff. According to the Policy, which Plaintiff purchased, Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana had the absolute duty to investigate Plaintiff's damages, and pay Plaintiff's policy benefits for the claims made due to the extensive storm-related damages.

27. As a result of the storm-related event, Plaintiff suffered extreme weather related damages. Despite objective evidence of weather related damages provided by Plaintiff and his representatives, Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana breached its contractual obligations under the Policy by failing to pay Plaintiff cost related benefits to properly repair the Property, as well as for related losses associated with the subject loss event. As a result of this breach, Plaintiff has suffered additional actual and consequential damages.

VIOLATIONS OF THE TEXAS DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICES ACT

28. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all facts and circumstances set forth under the foregoing paragraphs.

29. Defendant and/or its assigned adjuster engaged in false, misleading, or deceptive acts or practices that constitute violations of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act ("DTPA"), which is codified in the Texas Business and Commerce Code ("TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE"), including but not limited to:

- A. Using or employing an act or practice in violation of the Texas Insurance Code (§ 17.50(a)(4));
- B. Unreasonably delaying the investigation, adjustment, settlement offer and prompt resolution of Plaintiff's claim (TEX. INS. CODE § 541.060(a)(2)-(5));
- C. Failure to properly investigate Plaintiff's claim (§ 541.060(7)); and/or
- D. Hiring and relying upon a biased adjuster, in this case Defendant's assigned adjuster, to obtain a favorable, results-oriented report, and to assist Defendant in severely underpaying and/or denying Plaintiff's damage claim (TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE § 17.46(31)).

30. By Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana representing that they would pay the entire amount needed by Plaintiff to repair the damages caused by the weather related event and then not doing so, Defendant has violated §§ 17.46 (b)(5), (7), (12).

31. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana has breached an express warranty that the damage caused by the storm-related event would be covered under Policy. This breach entitles Plaintiff to recover under §§ 17.46 (b) (12), (20); 17.50 (a)(2).

32. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's actions, as described herein, are unconscionable in that Defendant took advantage of Plaintiff's lack of knowledge, ability, and experience to a grossly

unfair degree. Therefore, Defendant's unconscionable conduct gives Plaintiff the right to relief under § 17.50(a)(3).

33. Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's conduct, acts, omissions, and failures, as described in this Original Petition, are unfair practices in the business of insurance and are in violation of § 17.50 (a)(4).

34. Plaintiff is a consumer, as defined under the DTPA, and relied upon these false, misleading, and/or deceptive acts and/or practices made by Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana, to his detriment. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's collective acts and conduct, Plaintiff has been damaged in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdictional limits of this Court, for which Plaintiff now sues. All of the aforementioned acts, omissions, and failures of Defendant are a producing cause of Plaintiff's damages which are described in this Original Petition.

35. Because Defendant's collective actions and conduct were committed knowingly and intentionally, in addition to all damages described herein, Plaintiff is entitled to recover mental anguish damages and additional penalty damages, in an amount not to exceed three times such actual damages. § 17.50(b)(1).

36. As a result of Defendant's unconscionable, misleading, and deceptive actions and conduct, Plaintiff has been forced to retain the legal services of the undersigned attorneys to protect and pursue these claims on their behalf. Accordingly, Plaintiff also seeks to recover his costs and reasonable and necessary attorney's fees as permitted under § 17.50(d), as well as any other such damages to which Plaintiff may show himself to be justly entitled by law and in equity.

beneficiary, has a valid claim as a result of his detrimental reliance upon Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's unfair or deceptive acts or practices. § 541.151(2).

40. Defendant's aforementioned conduct compelled Plaintiff to initiate this lawsuit to recover amounts due under the Policy, by offering substantially less than the amount ultimately recovered. Defendant refused to offer more than the grossly undervalued estimates prepared by Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and/or Defendant's assigned adjuster, despite knowing the actual damages were much greater than what was offered. Defendant's continued refusal to offer compelled Plaintiff to file suit. § 542.003(5).

41. Since a violation of the Texas Insurance Code is a direct violation of the DTPA, and because Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's actions and conduct were committed knowingly and intentionally, Plaintiff is entitled to recover, in addition to all damages described herein, mental anguish damages and additional penalty damages, in an amount not to exceed three times the amount of actual damages, for Defendant having knowingly, intentionally and/or negligently committed said actions and conduct. § 541.152.

42. As a result of Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's unfair and deceptive actions and conduct, Plaintiff has been forced to retain the legal services of the undersigned attorneys to protect and pursue these claims on his behalf. Accordingly, Plaintiff also seeks to recover his costs and reasonable and necessary attorney's fees as permitted under TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE § 17.50(d) or TEX. INS. CODE § 541.152 and any other such damages to which Plaintiff may show himself justly entitled by law and in equity.

**BREACH OF THE COMMON LAW DUTY
OF GOOD FAITH & FAIR DEALING**

43. Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all facts and circumstances in the foregoing paragraphs.
44. From and after the time Plaintiff's claim was presented to Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana, the liability of Defendant to pay the full claim in accordance with the terms of the Policy was more than reasonably clear. However, Defendant has refused to pay Plaintiff in full, despite there being no basis whatsoever on which a reasonable insurance company would have relied on to deny full payment. Defendant's conduct constitutes a breach of the common law duty of good faith and fair dealing. *See Viles v. Security National Ins. Co.*, 788 S.W.2d 556, 567 (Tex. 1990) (holding that an insurer has a duty to its insureds to "investigate claims thoroughly and in good faith" and an insurer can only deny a claim after a thorough investigation shows that there is a reasonable basis to deny that claim).
45. For the breach of the common law duty of good faith and fair dealing, Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages, including all forms of loss resulting from Defendant's breach of the duty, such additional costs, economic hardship, losses due to nonpayment of the amount owed to Plaintiff, and/or exemplary damages for emotional distress.

KNOWLEDGE

46. Each of the acts described above, together and singularly, were done "knowingly" and "intentionally," as the terms are used in the Texas Insurance Code, and were a producing cause of Plaintiff's damages described herein.

DAMAGES

47. Plaintiff will show that all of the aforementioned acts, taken together or singularly, constitute the producing causes of the damages sustained by Plaintiff.
48. For breach of contract, Plaintiff is entitled to regain the benefit of Plaintiff's bargain, which is the amount of Plaintiff's claim, together with attorney's fees.
49. For noncompliance with the Texas Insurance Code, Unfair Settlement Practices, Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages, which include the loss of the benefit that should have been paid pursuant to the Policy, court costs and attorney's fees. For knowing conduct of the acts complained of, Plaintiff asks for three times Plaintiff's actual damages. TEX. INS. CODE § 541.152.
50. For noncompliance with Texas Insurance Code, Prompt Payment of Claims, Plaintiff is entitled to the amount of Plaintiff's claim, interest on the claim at the rate of ten (10) percent per year, together with attorney's fees. § 542.060.
51. For breach of the common law duty of good faith and fair dealing, Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages, including all forms of loss resulting from the insurer's breach of duty, such as additional costs, economic hardship, losses due to nonpayment of the amount the insurer owed, and/or exemplary damages for emotional distress.
52. For the prosecution and collection of this claim, Plaintiff has been compelled to engage the services of the law firm whose name is subscribed to this pleading. Therefore, Plaintiff is entitled to recover a sum for the reasonable and necessary services of Plaintiff's attorneys in the preparation and trial of this action, including any appeals to the Court of Appeals and/or the Supreme Court of Texas.

53. Defendant's acts have been the producing and/or proximate cause of damage to Plaintiff, and Plaintiff seeks an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdictional limits of this Court.

54. More specifically, Plaintiff seeks monetary relief, including damages of any kind, penalties, costs, expenses, pre-judgment interest, and attorney's fees, (in excess of \$200,000.00 but less than \$1,000,000.00/ in excess of \$1,000,000.00).

ADDITIONAL DAMAGES & PENALTIES

55. Defendant's conduct was committed knowingly and intentionally. Accordingly, Defendant is liable for additional damages under the DTPA, TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE § 17.50(b)(1), as well as all operative provisions of the Texas Insurance Code. Plaintiff is clearly entitled to the 18% damages allowed under TEX. INS. CODE § 542.060.

ATTORNEY'S FEES

56. In addition, Plaintiff is entitled to all reasonable and necessary attorney's fees pursuant to the Texas Insurance Code, DTPA, and TEX. CIV. PRAC. & REM. CODE §§ 38.001-.005.

JURY DEMAND

57. Plaintiff demands a jury trial, consisting of citizens residing in Collin County, Texas, and tenders the appropriate fee with this Original Petition.

DISCOVERY

58. Texas Rule of Civil Procedure 47 has been met in this petition. As such, Plaintiff requests that Defendant respond to the Requests for Disclosure, Requests for Production and Interrogatories contained herein:

I. REQUESTS FOR DISCLOSURE

1. Pursuant to the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, Plaintiff requests that Defendant Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana, disclose all information and/or material as required by Rule 194.2, paragraphs (a) through (l), and to do so within 50 days of this request.

II. REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION

1. Please produce Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's complete claim files from the home, regional and local offices, as well as third party adjusters/adjusting firms regarding the subject claim, including copies of the file jackets, "field" files and notes, and drafts of documents contained in the file for the premises relating to or arising out of Plaintiff's underlying claim.
2. Please produce the underwriting files referring or relating in any way to the policy at issue in this action, including the file folders in which the underwriting documents are kept and drafts of all documents in the file.
3. Please produce a certified copy of the insurance policy pertaining to the claim made subject of this lawsuit, including all underwriting files and insurance applications sent on behalf of Plaintiff in his attempt to secure insurance on the Property, which is the subject of this suit.
4. Please produce the electronic diary, including the electronic and paper notes made by Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's claims personnel, contractors, and third party adjusters/adjusting firms relating to the Plaintiff's claim.
5. Please produce all emails and other forms of communication by and between all parties in this matter relating to the underlying event, claim or the Property, which is the subject of this suit.

6. Please produce the adjusting reports, estimates and appraisals prepared concerning Plaintiff's underlying claim.
7. Please produce the field notes, measurements and file maintained by the adjuster(s) and engineers who physically inspected the Property, which is the subject of this suit.
8. Please produce the emails, instant messages and internal correspondence pertaining to Plaintiff's underlying claim.
9. Please produce the videotapes, photographs and recordings of Plaintiff or Plaintiff's home, regardless of whether Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana intends to offer these items into evidence at trial.
10. Please produce all communications, correspondence, documents and emails between any and all assigned adjusters and/or agents and the Plaintiff, not limited to physical or audio recordings of all conversations between Plaintiff and any and all assigned adjusters and/or agents.
11. Please produce all audio recordings or transcripts of conversations, calls, text, email or any other data sent to and from Plaintiff by any and all assigned adjusters and/or agents after their letter of representation sent by counsel.
12. Please provide copies of all marketing material sent on behalf of Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and/or its agents after the date of loss of the Property, which is the subject of this suit.
13. Please provide all correspondence between Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and its assigned adjuster, and all correspondence between Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana and its assigned agents, after the date of loss of the Property, which is the subject of this suit.

III. INTERROGATORIES

1. Please identify any person Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana expects to call to testify at the time of trial.
2. Please identify the persons involved in the investigation and handling of Plaintiff's claim for insurance benefits arising from damage relating to the underlying event, claim or the Property, which is the subject of this suit, and include a brief description of the involvement of each person identified, their employer, and the date(s) of such involvement.
3. If Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana or Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's representatives performed any investigative steps in addition to what is reflected in the claims file, please generally describe those investigative steps conducted by Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana or any of Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's representatives with respect to the facts surrounding the circumstances of the subject loss. Identify the persons involved in each step.
4. Please identify by date, author, and result the estimates, appraisals, engineering, mold and other reports generated as a result of Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's investigation.
5. Please state the following concerning notice of claim and timing of payment:
 - a. The date and manner in which Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana received notice of the claim;
 - b. The date and manner in which Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana acknowledged receipt of the claim;

c. The date and manner in which Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana commenced investigation of the claim;

d. The date and manner in which Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana requested from the claimant all items, statements, and forms that Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana reasonably believed, at the time, would be required from the claimant pursuant to the investigation; and

e. The date and manner in which Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana notified the claimant in writing of the acceptance or rejection of the claim.

6. Please identify by date, amount and reason, the insurance proceeds payments made by Defendant, or on Defendant's behalf, to the Plaintiff.

7. Has Plaintiff's claim for insurance benefits been rejected or denied? If so, state the reasons for rejecting/denying the claim.

8. When was the date Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana anticipated litigation?

9. Have any documents (including those maintained electronically) relating to the investigation or handling of Plaintiff's claim for insurance benefits been destroyed or disposed of? If so, please identify what, when and why the document was destroyed, and describe Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana's document retention policy.

10. Does Safeco Insurance Company of Indiana contend that the insured's premises were damaged by storm-related events and/or any excluded peril? If so, state the general factual basis for this contention.

for all costs of Court on their behalf expended, for pre-judgment and post-judgment interest as allowed by law, and for any other and further relief, either at law or in equity, to which Plaintiff may show himself to be justly entitled.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

s/ Sean Patterson

MCCLENNY MOSELEY & ASSOCIATES,
PLLC

James M. McClenny

State Bar No. 24091857

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FIRST-CLASS MAIL

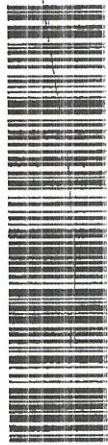
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ALICIA HAMILIN
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RETURN RECEIPT (ELECTRONIC)

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SAFECO INSURANCE COMPANY OF INDIANA
PRODUCTION REGISTRATION
CORPORATION SERVICE COMPANY
211 E 7TH ST STE 620
AUSTIN, TX 78701-3218